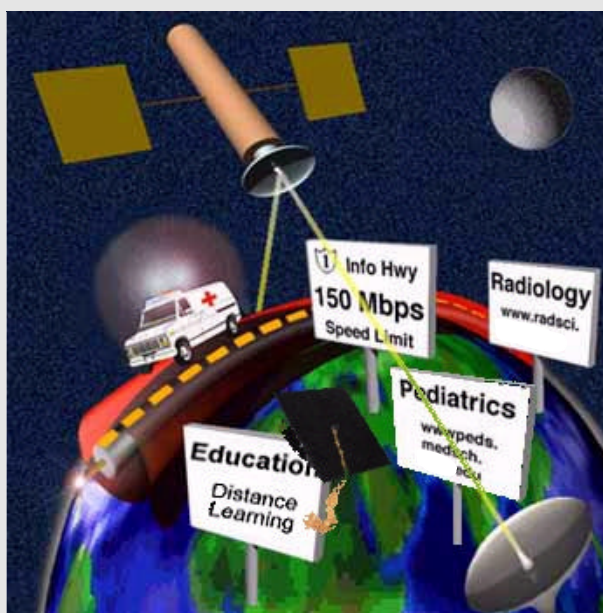


RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program Application Guide Fiscal Year 1999



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Rural Utilities Service Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

By submitting an application for financing under the **Rural Utilities Service's** Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program, you are making a significant commitment to better the quality of life in rural America. Your organization is to be commended for its attempts to give rural residents -- students, teachers, parents, patients, doctors -- opportunities once available and affordable only to your urban counterparts. Quality education, health care, and stable economies are goals of all communities across the U.S.; and, in rural America, advanced telecommunications technologies are helping to meet the challenges of fulfilling these goals.

DLT Projects:

- **Promote Partnerships**
- **Solve Problems**
- **Are Locally Supported**

The **DLT Program** is designed specifically to meet the educational and health care requirements of rural America. It is a program about rural America, for rural America, and delivered to rural America. The purpose of the DLT program is to provide financial assistance to enhance learning and health care opportunities for rural residents. The program asks applicants to define the educational or health care problems that face their communities and determine how Federal distance learning or telemedicine assistance can help.

The Federal partnership with rural America has been long-standing. Initiatives like the DLT program strengthen that partnership. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 (Act) recognized the need to provide discounts to all schools, libraries, and rural health care providers for telecommunications services. This provision of the Act was implemented by the Federal Communications Commission in 1997 and provides relief by discounting recurring, monthly telecommunications costs and inside wiring. These discounts provide only part of the assistance needed to create a fully functional rural connection to the information superhighway. The DLT Grant program, which focuses on end-user equipment, and the DLT Combination Loan and Grant Program and the DLT Loan Program, which are not limited to end-user equipment, complement the Act's telecommunications service discounts. Together, they provide critical assistance in making modern telecommunications technology, which provides enhanced learning and health care services, affordable and available to rural citizens.

In the pages that follow, applicants will find detailed information regarding eligibility requirements, funding purposes and types of financial assistance; the how, when, and where to submit an application; as well as other guidelines that will be useful in preparing your application for financial assistance. This guide should be used in conjunction with 7 CFR Part 1703, Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program. We look forward to reviewing your application -- a sign of commitment to rural America -- in the near future. Information about RUS and DLT, including 7 CFR Part 1703 and this application guide, can be retrieved electronically *via the internet* at:

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/dlt/dlml.htm>

General Information

!! BEFORE YOU GET STARTED !!

You must read:

- ♦ *7 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 1703, Subparts D, E, F, and G, Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.*

This regulation **MUST** be used in conjunction with this application guide. Should any differences result in the interpretation of this Application Guide and 7 CFR Part 1703, the regulation will take precedence over information contained in this Application Guide.

This Guide is divided into three sections to assist applicants in applying for one of the three types of financing available.

➤ ***Types of Financial Assistance:***

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program is structured to provide ***three categories of financial assistance:***

- 1) ***100% Grants;***
- 2) ***100% Loans; and***
- 3) ***Combination Loans and Grants***

➤ ***Minimum and Maximum Financing Requests:***

The ***maximum amount*** of financial assistance to be made available to an individual recipient for each fiscal year is established by the Administrator of RUS by publishing a notice in the Federal Register. The ***minimum size*** of an application is \$50,000.

➤ ***When and Where to Submit Your Application:***

GRANT applications must be postmarked by:

July 9, 1999

COMBINATION LOAN and GRANT applications may be submitted at:

anytime!!

Applications for Combination Loans and Grants will be processed as received, on a first-come, first-served basis. Although applications may be submitted at anytime, to ensure consideration for approval during fiscal year 1999, which ends September 30, 1999, applications should be postmarked by:

August 31, 1999

Combination Loan and Grant applications postmarked after this date will continue to be processed; however, no assurances can be provided for consideration for approval before the end of the fiscal year.

Applications must be submitted to:

ORREN E. CAMERON
DIRECTOR, ADVANCED SERVICES STAFF
RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE
US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
STOP 1550, ROOM 2845
1400 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE, SW
WASHINGTON, DC 20250-1550

All Grant applications must be mailed to the address above. Applications for a Combination Loan and Grant or Loan may also be submitted to RUS telecommunications General Field representatives (GFRs) or to Rural Development State Directors. All applicants must submit **an original and two copies** of a completed application. The applicant must also submit a copy of the application to the **State government point of contact**, if one has been designated for the State, at the same time it submits an application.

A listing of GFRs and state Rural Development office contacts is provided as Attachments 14 and 15, respectively, to this application guide.

I. Applying for a GRANT

The Processing of Grants

Completed applications must be postmarked no later than July 9, 1999, to be considered for funding during fiscal year 1999, ending on September 30, 1999. Grant applications will be scored in accordance with the provisions of 7 CFR 1703.126, Criteria for Scoring Grant Applications.

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a Grant under the DLT Program, the applicant must be organized in one of the following corporate structures:

- ◆ An incorporated organization, partnership, Indian tribe and tribal organization as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (b) and (c) or other legal entity which operates or will operate a school, college, university, learning center, training facility, or other educational institution, including a regional educational laboratory, library, hospital, medical center, medical clinic or any rural community facility.
- ◆ A consortium, as defined in §1703.102.
- ◆ An incorporated organization, partnership, Indian tribe and tribal organization as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (b) and (c) or other legal entity which is providing or proposes to provide telemedicine service or distance learning service to other legal entities or consortia at rates calculated to ensure that the economic value and other benefits of the distance learning or telemedicine grant or loan is passed through to such other legal entities or consortia.
- ◆ Electric or telecommunications borrowers are eligible for loans only.

At least one of the entities in a partnership or consortium must be eligible individually and the partnership or consortium must provide written evidence of its legal capacity to contract with RUS.

Important Note about Consortia !!
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Rurality Requirement

The proposed project must meet the educational and health care requirements of rural areas. Applicants must meet the minimum eligibility of 20 points based on its Rurality calculation determining the extent to which the project serves rural areas. A "Rural Calculation Table" is provided for this computation (**See attachment 2b**).

Matching Funds Requirement

GRANT funds may be used by eligible organizations to fund up to 70 percent of approved purposes; at least 30 percent of the project must be funded by matching contributions to be eligible for a GRANT. For purposes of determining the applicant's ability to leverage resources in §1703.126(b)(4), the minimum matching contribution of 30 percent of the amount designated for approved purposes equals 42.85 percent of the Grant requested.

Grant Funds	=	70%
Matching Funds	=	30%
Total Eligible Project Costs	=	100%

Special Note: "IN-KIND" MATCHING REQUIREMENT

In-Kind Matching Provision:

The applicant's minimum funding requirement for

Grants (specified in 7 CFR Part 1703.120) for eligible purposes is generally required in the form of **cash**. However, **IN-KIND** contributions for the purposes listed in 7 CFR 1703.121 **may be substituted** for cash. **IN-KIND** items **must be non-depreciated or new assets** with an established monetary value.

IMPORTANT!!!:

It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you remember that **matching funds** and **In-Kind matching funds** must be for **APPROVED** financing purposes and **CANNOT** be other **FEDERAL FUNDS**. Apply the same test as you would to amounts requested from RUS for approved purposes!!

Approved Grant Purposes

Grants shall be limited to costs associated with the initial capital assets associated with the project. The following are allowable purposes:

YES! Acquiring, by lease or purchase, eligible equipment as defined in §1703.102;

YES! Acquiring instructional programming; and

YES! Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment, including any related software; developing instructional programming; providing engineering or environmental studies relating to the establishment or expansion of the phase of the project that is being financed with the Grant (this purpose shall not exceed 10 percent of the grant).

Nonapproved Grant Purposes

Without limitation, funds will **NOT** be provided:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| NO! | To cover the costs of installing or constructing telecommunications transmission facilities, other than those facilities not available and necessary for the completion of the proposed project and not otherwise available; |
| NO! | To pay for medical equipment not having telemedicine as its essential function; |
| NO! | To pay salaries, wages, or employee benefits to medical or educational personnel; |
| NO! | To pay for the salaries or administrative expenses of the applicant or the project; |
| NO! | To purchase equipment that will be owned by the local exchange carrier or another telecommunications service provider <i>unless that service provider is the applicant</i> ; |
| NO! | To duplicate facilities providing distance learning or telemedicine services in place or to reimburse the applicant or others for costs incurred prior to RUS' receipt of the completed application; |
| NO! | To pay costs of preparing the application package for financial assistance under this program; |
| NO! | For projects whose sole objective is to provide links between teachers and students or between medical professionals who are located at the same facility; |
| NO! | For site development and the destruction or alteration of buildings; |
| NO! | For the purchase of land, buildings, or building construction; |
| NO! | For projects located in areas covered by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.); |
| NO! | For any purpose that the Administrator has not specifically approved; |
| NO! | Except for leases provided for in §1703.121, to pay the cost of recurring or operating expenses for the project; or |
| NO! | For any other purposes not specifically contained in §1703.121. |

Except as otherwise provided in §1703.121, Grant funds shall not be used to finance a project, in part, when success of the project is dependent upon the receipt of additional financial assistance under 7 CFR Part 1703 or is dependent upon the receipt of other funding that is not assured.

EXCEPTION!

Completing the Grant Application

This section addresses all of the information that must be submitted for an application to be complete and considered for financing:

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. <i>A Completed Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424)</i> | I. <i>Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations</i> |
| B. <i>An Executive Summary of the Project</i> | J. <i>Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation</i> |
| C. <i>Scoring Criteria Documentation</i> | K. <i>Evidence of Authority and Existence</i> |
| D. <i>A Scope of Work</i> | L. <i>Federal Debt Certification</i> |
| E. <i>Financial Information</i> | M. <i>Consultation with USDA State Director, Rural Development</i> |
| F. <i>A Statement of Experience</i> | N. <i>State Strategic Plan Conformity</i> |
| G. <i>Funding Commitments from Other Sources</i> | O. <i>Supplemental Information</i> |
| H. <i>A Telecommunications System Plan</i> | |

A. *A Completed Standard Form 424, “Application for Federal Assistance”*

Complete this form along with a board of directors resolution authorizing the funding request, Attachment 1.

B. *An Executive Summary of the Project*

The executive summary is one of the most important parts of the application. It gives reviewers their first overall view of the area to be served, what problems the residents face, and how the proposed project will help alleviate those problems, increase the quality of life, and provide enhanced opportunities for rural residents to receive better quality educational and health care opportunities. Give a concise **SUMMARY** of the project. This is your opportunity to briefly discuss the core aspects of the project:

- ◆ *The goals of the project.*
- ◆ *The communities to be served.*
- ◆ *The organizations participating as project partners.*
- ◆ *The technologies to be used.*

The executive summary brings together all of the bits of information which make your application for financing unique. Be clear and provide convincing links between project and benefits. The executive summary must provide a general project overview covering the following nine categories.

Executive Summary

1. A description of why the project is needed.
2. An explanation of how the project will address the needs, why the applicant requires financial assistance, the types of educational or medical services to be offered, and the benefits to the rural residents.
3. A description of the applicant, documenting eligibility.
4. An explanation of the total project cost including a breakdown of the Grant required and the source of matching contribution and other financial assistance for the remainder of the project.
5. A statement that the project is either for a distance learning or telemedicine purpose. If the project provides both distance learning and telemedicine services, the applicant must identify the predominant use of the system.
6. A general overview of the telecommunications system to be developed, including the types of equipment, technologies, and facilities used.
7. A description of the participating hubs and end users sites and the number of rural residents that will be served by the proposed project at each end user site.
8. A certification that the facilities purchased or constructed using financial assistance do not duplicate adequate, established telemedicine services or distance learning services.
9. A listing of the location of each end user site (city, town, village, borough, or rural areas, including state).

Number each paragraph as shown in the example above. Remember, this summary is the first overall picture of your request for assistance and what problems you are attempting to solve.

C. Scoring Criteria Documentation

There are seven scoring categories that must be addressed by applicants in order to be considered for funding. They are:

- ◆ The ***need*** for services, the need of the applicant, and the ***benefits*** derived from services.
- ◆ The comparative ***rurality*** of the proposed service area.
- ◆ The ***economic*** need as estimated by the ***NSLP*** (National School Lunch Program) or other supplemental objective criteria.
- ◆ The ability to ***leverage*** resources.
- ◆ ***Innovativeness*** of the project.
- ◆ The ***cost effectiveness*** of the system.
- ◆ Project participation in USDA Federal ***EZ/EC*** (Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Communities) and ***Champion*** communities.

Of the seven scoring criteria listed above, four are objective criteria. The objective categories are straightforward indicators that measure the economic need and rurality of the areas to be served by the proposed project, the applicant's ability to leverage resources, and the project's participation in USDA Federal EZ/EC (www.ezec.gov) and/or Champion communities (numbers 2, 3, 4, and 7, above). Included in this application guide are forms that applicants should use to address these criteria, Attachments 2a, 2b, and 2c.

The other three scoring criteria (numbers 1, 5, and 6, above) are subjective criteria. In addressing these three scoring criteria, applicants must describe the unique circumstances involving their proposed project and how they propose to use Federal financing provided through this program in conjunction with other resources to address their communities' needs. When addressing these criteria, applicants should clearly title each of the criteria and specifically address all aspects of the application that contribute to the scoring criteria. It is important that all of the information regarding a particular subjective scoring criterion be included in one section titled by that criterion. For example:

<p><u>THE NEED FOR SERVICES AND THE BENEFITS DERIVED FROM SERVICES</u></p> <p>Our proposed project is needed...</p> <p>The services provided will enable hundreds of residents to receive health care services...</p> <p>Our students are not receiving the necessary instruction which will prepare them for the future...</p> <p>Our organization can't afford it...</p>	<p><u>INNOVATIVENESS OF THE PROJECT</u></p> <p>We are proposing to use state-of-the-art technologies in a way which will enable the maximum benefit to be derived by...</p> <p>By configuring our design in this manner, we will achieve a higher level of success because...</p>
<p><u>THE COST EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM.</u></p> <p>We propose to connect our service to institutions of higher learning on a national level...</p> <p>The connectivity to other networks will enable our hospitals to access advanced services such as...</p> <p>Without networking our system, we would be limited to providing only certain services...-</p> <p>Savings for the overall project resulted from utilizing existing facilities versus...</p> <p>When compared to buying the equipment, the lease cost proved superior because...</p>	

Use as many pages as is necessary to address each of the subjective criteria. In addition, don't be concerned about covering the same aspect of the application in more than one scoring criterion if the aspect fits more than one criterion. By clearly addressing each of the three subjective scoring criteria in its own section, applicants will better enable the reviewers to fairly and equitably evaluate the application and assign points. Because the subjective scoring criteria play such an important role in the applicant's ability to demonstrate the value of its proposed project, we elaborate below on each criterion and provide some guidelines that can be used by the applicant in preparing its documentation for each of the subjective scoring criteria.

KEY WORDS

Needs, Benefits,
Documentation of
effect upon lives

The Documented Need for Services and the Benefits Derived from Services (Up to 55 points)

Applicants should provide: 1) documentation that explains the economic, educational, or health care challenges facing their communities; 2) the proposed plan to address those challenges; 3) how Federal financial assistance can help; and 4) why the project cannot be completed without financial assistance.

Applicants may receive up to 45 points for documenting the need for services and benefits derived from service. In addition, applicants with **an average NSLP percentage of less than 50 percent** may receive up to an additional 10 points based on information submitted that evidences the economic need of the project's service area that may not have been addressed by the NSLP score. **ONLY applicants** whose NSLP percentage is less than 50 percent are eligible for the additional 10 points. Applicants should clearly indicate their justification for consideration of additional points when providing documentation for scoring under this criterion.

Educational and learning projects can seek to improve education and training opportunities of all types, for people of all stages of life, in both traditional and non-traditional settings. Health care projects can seek to improve the availability of quality health care in rural areas through health care delivery or training or other purposes addressing community needs. In this section of the application, the applicant has the opportunity to explain the current situation; explain how it proposes to make that situation better; provide documentation of the **NEED** to make things better; and describe the **BENEFITS** derived by the community from the proposed project.

For educational projects, examples may include: linking rural schools together to share resources; linking different types of schools, grade school to community college to vocational school to university to each other and to health care facilities or to businesses; linking trainers and trainees to employers or educators; training to move people from welfare to work; literacy programs for children, teens, and adults; and other learning projects that the community believes are necessary to address educational concerns or fill an educational void.

For projects aimed at health care initiatives, examples might include: telemedicine linking health care providers to each other for patient consultations, health related training and counseling; providing for or the retention of health care facilities, home health care, mobile health care, care

of the elderly; and other health care initiatives that would enable the community to fulfill a health care need.

Remember, when addressing this scoring criterion, applicants must address the specific needs of the community and how the proposed project will address those needs. This is the section where you tell us what your problem is and how the proposed project, funded in part by this program, can help. Applicants should attempt to QUANTIFY benefits in terms of outcomes from the project; that is, ways in which peoples' lives, or the community, will be affected and changed. Try to provide projections on the number of people affected by the benefits arising from the project. Also, please explain why you, as the applicant (consortia, if applicable), can't afford to do the project without our financial assistance. Documentation should reference your financial statements supporting this judgment.

outcome *n*, A final consequence:
RESULT.
benefit *n*, Something promoting
or enhancing well-being
ADVANTAGE.

KEY WORDS

Innovative, Unique,
Experimental, New
Approach

Innovativeness of the Design (Up to 15 points)

How can modern telecommunications technology be used to meet the unique service requirements, be it educational or health care or both, of the rural community? This is the question your application will be answering. The application should stress any use of telecommunications technology that is a **new approach** to delivering educational or health care services in the proposed project's service area.

Applicants should explain the "extent" of the **INNOVATIVENESS** of their proposed project. Innovativeness may take many forms, including the type of technology used, the way the

Creative + Resourceful + *Original* = INNOVATIVE!

technology is used, or the purpose for which the technology is used. Applicants should provide

documentation of the Innovativeness of the design of their projects as it relates to the overall scope of the project and the problems the applicant is trying to address. Members of your community have spent many hours brainstorming on ways to increase the quality of life for its residents, how to achieve economic stability, and how to provide the best future for the children. Tell us how you arrived at the proposed project, and describe the Innovativeness of your approach to your community's problems using telecommunications.

KEY WORDS

Value, Right Choice,
Affordable

The Cost Effectiveness of the System (Up to 35 points)

"Cost" is one reason for submitting an application for financing. In many rural areas, resources are limited and the maximization of those limited resources is critical to delivering high quality educational and health care services. Some of the items to be considered here include the leasing of facilities compared to buying them; wireless technologies that may reduce construction and

maintenance costs; the maximum use of existing facilities, thereby eliminating some equipment and construction costs; and the use of appropriate levels of technologies for the services being delivered, such as slow scan video where appropriate and adequate versus costly full motion (i.e., narrow band vs. broad band). Some examples of cost effectiveness include: development of cost comparison schedules; utilization of long-term or pre-negotiated contracts that reflect savings over shorter renewable terms; and the deployment of appropriate levels of technologies, plant or equipment adequate to meet the needs of the project. When reviewing an application to determine how cost effective the design is, the ability to verify quantifiable cost savings through documentation is critical.

**How are you
getting THE
BIGGEST BANG
FOR YOUR
BUCK!!**

KEY WORDS

Expandability,
Opportunity,
Resources

Local? Regional? Statewide? National? Global! Network connectivity can be the key to unlocking the information age for rural communities. At what **LEVEL** will the proposed project connect with other networks. A design that allows for connection to the widest practicable number of other networks is the most desirable for deriving the maximum benefits from a project using telecommunications to address educational and health care needs. The key here is to provide a system design with future capabilities, not only “hard” connection. This will expand the proposed project and allow rural residents opportunities that would generally not be available on the local level. RUS encourages applicants to interconnect with other learning centers’ or health care providers’ networks to increase information exchange, leverage human and technical resources, and exchange technical expertise and information.

A word to the wise: While the Internet is an excellent resource, the ability to connect to the Internet alone cannot be used as a sole basis to fulfill this objective.

D. A Scope of Work

The proposed scope of work completes the picture for the application reviewer. It incorporates how the applicant proposes to proceed with the project, if funded. The scope of work must include, at a minimum, the following:

- ◆ The specific activities to be performed under the project.
- ◆ Who will carry out the activities
- ◆ The timeframes for accomplishing the project objectives and activities.
- ◆ A budget for all capital expenditures reflecting the line item costs for approved purposes for both the grant funds and other sources of funds for the project. Separately, the budget must specify any line item costs that are nonapproved purposes for Grants as contained in § 1703.123. (**See Attachment 3**).

**Explain what
you plan to
do!!!**

The Proposed Scope of Work explains what you plan to do. It is your opportunity to make a clear and convincing presentation of the goals of your project

E. Financial Information

The applicant must provide a summary explaining how the enclosed financial information supports the applicant's need for the financing requested for the project including a detailed justification of the pro-forma financial data. The financial information must show both the applicant's financial capacity to carry out the proposed work (including the project's feasibility), and the applicant's need for assistance. All institutions participating in a project application (including all members of a consortium), must include an income statement (or equivalent revenue and expense reports) and balance sheets (reflecting net worth) for the most recent annual reporting period preceding the date of the application. When the applicant is a partnership, company, corporation, or other entity, current balance sheets (reflecting net worth) are needed from each of the entities that has at least a 20 percent interest in the applicant. When the applicant is a consortium, a current balance sheet (reflecting net worth) is needed from each member of the consortium and from each of the entities that has at least a 20 percent interest in such member of the consortium.

The applicant must demonstrate its **inability** to undertake the project without Grant financing as opposed to Loan financing. In addition:

- ◆ Applicants must include sufficient pro-forma financial data to demonstrate feasibility of the project and the financial capability of the project participants to continue a sustainable project for a minimum of 10 years after completion of the project. This documentation should include non-contingent sources of income or revenues that are sufficient to pay operating expenses including telecommunications access and toll charges, system maintenance, salaries, training, and any other general operating expenses, and provide for replacement of depreciable items.
- ◆ For each hub and end user site, the applicant must identify and provide reasonable evidence of each source of revenue. If the projection relies on cost sharing arrangements among hub and end user sites, the applicant must provide evidence of agreements made among project participants.
- ◆ Applicants that are proposing to provide service to other service providers must provide an explanation of the economic analysis justifying the rate structure to ensure that the benefit, including cost saving, of the financial assistance is passed through to those receiving telemedicine or distance learning services.

F. A Statement of Experience

An applicant must provide a written narrative (not exceeding three single spaced pages) describing its demonstrated capability and experience, if any, in operating an educational or health care endeavor and any project similar to the proposed project. Experience in a similar project is desirable but not required.

G. Funding Commitments from Other Sources

Applicants must provide evidence that all funds in addition to funds requested from RUS are committed and will be used for the proposed project. A letter from the organization providing matching funds would be a good example of the evidence required. Also, applicants must verify that any In-Kind items are non-depreciated or new assets with established monetary value. A letter from the organization providing the In-Kind items should include a description of the item, a specified value of the item, and the purchase date.

H. A Telecommunications System Plan

The Telecommunications System Plan (Plan) is an essential part of the application since it will aid in the scoring of the application in such areas as Cost Effectiveness of the System, and Innovativeness of the Project. The Plan should show that the technology chosen is the most cost effective to provide the needed services and how modern telecommunications technology will be used to meet the unique service requirements of the community. The Plan should explain how telecommunications would be used to enable the proposed project to interconnect with other existing networks at the regional, state, national, or international level. The Plan should discuss any aspects of the project where telecommunications will play an essential part. (See § 1703.125(h) for details.)

I. Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations

The applicant is required to submit evidence that it is in compliance with other Federal statutes and regulations as follows:

- ◆ E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60, Attachment 4;
- ◆ Architectural barriers, Attachment 5;
- ◆ Flood hazard area precautions, Attachment 6;
- ◆ Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, Attachment 7;
- ◆ Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (41 U.S.C. 701), Attachment 8;
- ◆ E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension; (**See 7 CFR 3017.510**), Attachment 9;
- ◆ Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352), Attachment 10;
 - If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (**See 7 CFR Part 3018**); and
- ◆ Non Duplication of Services Certificate, Attachment 11.

J. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation

Details of the project's impact on the environment and historic preservation must be provided. The application must contain a separate section entitled "Environmental Impact of the Project."

Environmental Information - An "Environmental Questionnaire/Certification," may be used by applicants to assist in complying with the requirements of this section. Attachment 12.

For a proposed project that only involves internal modifications or equipment additions to buildings or other structures, the environmental information

EXCEPTION!

normally required includes a description of the internal modifications or equipment additions, the size of the site in hectares, and the general nature of the proposed use of the facilities once the project is completed, including any hazardous materials to be used, created or discharged, any substantial amount of air emissions, wastewater discharge, or solid waste that will be generated.

K. Evidence of Authority and Existence

Provide documentation describing your organization and citing its authority to enter into a Grant agreement with RUS and perform the activities proposed under the application.

L. Federal Debt Certification

Complete Attachment 13 certifying that the applicant is not delinquent on any Federal debt and understands actions the Federal Government may take if it fails to make scheduled payments.

M. Consultation with USDA State Director, Rural Development

The applicant must provide evidence that it has consulted with the USDA State Director, Rural Development, concerning the availability of other sources of funding available at the State or local level. (See Attachment 15).

N. State Strategic Plan Conformity

The applicant must also provide evidence from the USDA State Director, Rural Development, that the application conforms with the State strategic plan as prepared under section 381D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1921 et seq.). (The applicant should indicate if such a plan does not exist.)

O. Supplemental Information

Provide any additional information RUS may consider relevant to the application and necessary to adequately evaluate the application.

Putting It All together

The GRANT application should be assembled and tabbed in the following order: Numbered attachments are provided at the end of this guide for your use. Use only the applicable attachments listed below.

1. An Application for Federal Assistance: Completed Standard Form 424, Attachment 1
2. An Executive Summary
3. The Documented Need for Services and the Benefits Derived from Services
4. Innovativeness of the Design
5. The Cost Effectiveness of the System
6. Summary Worksheet, Attachment 2
 - (a) Objective Scoring Worksheet, Attachment 2a
 - (b) Rural Calculation Table, Attachment 2b
 - (c) National School Lunch Program Determination, Attachment 2c
 - (d) Designation of Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities or Champion Communities
 - (e) Funding Commitments from all sources
7. A Proposed Scope of Work
8. A Sample Budget, Attachment 3
9. Financial Summary and Documentation
10. Statement of Experience
11. Telecommunications System Plan
12. Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations
 - (a) E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60, Attachment 4;
 - (b) Architectural barriers, Attachment 5;
 - (c) Flood hazard area precautions, Attachment 6;
 - (d) Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, Attachment 7;
 - (e) Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (41 U.S.C. 701), Attachment 8;
 - (f) E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension; (**See 7 CFR 3017.510**), Attachment 9;
 - (g) Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352), Attachment 10;
 - If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (**See 7 CFR Part 3018**); and
 - (h) Non Duplication of Services Certificate, Attachment 11.
13. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation, Attachment 12
14. Evidence of Authority and Existence
15. Federal Debt Certification, Attachment 13
16. Evidence of Consultation with the USDA State Director, Rural Development, Attachment 15
17. State Strategic Plan Conformity
18. Documentation of the applicant’s desire or lack of interest to be considered for a loan if the project is not selected as a grant recipient
19. Supplemental Information

Sample certificates and forms are included for your use

II. Applying for a COMBINATION Loan and Grant

The Processing of Combination Loans and Grants

Completed applications can be submitted at anytime and will be processed on a first come, first served basis based on availability of funds, the financial feasibility of the project, the services to be provided, the design of the project, costs, location, and other characteristics of the project. RUS will accept applications for a combination loan and grant submitted by RUS telecommunications GFRs, by Rural Development State Directors, or by the applicants themselves. All applicants must submit an original and two copies of a completed application. The applicant must also submit a copy of the application to the State government point of contact, if one has been designated for the State, at the same time it submits an application.

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a Combination Loan and Grant under the DLT Program, the applicant must be organized in one of the following corporate structures:

- ◆ An incorporated organization, partnership, Indian tribe and tribal organization as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (b) and (c) or other legal entity which operates or will operate a school, college, university, learning center, training facility, or other educational institution, including a regional educational laboratory, library, hospital, medical center, medical clinic or any rural community facility.
- ◆ A consortium, as defined in §1703.102.
- ◆ An incorporated organization, partnership, Indian tribe and tribal organization as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (b) and (c) or other legal entity which is providing or proposes to provide telemedicine service or distance learning service to other legal entities or consortia at rates calculated to ensure that the economic value and other benefits of the distance learning or telemedicine grant or loan is passed through to such other legal entities or consortia.
- ◆ Electric or telecommunications borrowers are eligible for loans only.

At least one of the entities in a partnership or consortium must be eligible individually and the partnership or consortium must provide written evidence of its legal capacity to contract with RUS.

Important Note about Consortia !!
--

Rurality Requirement

The proposed project must primarily meet the educational and health care requirements of rural areas. Applicants must meet the minimum eligibility of **20 points** based on its Rurality calculation determining the extent to which the project serves rural areas. A "Rural Calculation Table" is provided for this computation (**See attachment 2b**).

There is NO Matching Fund Requirement

A combination loan and grant may be used by eligible organizations for distance learning and telemedicine projects to finance **100%** of the cost of approved purposes.

Approved Combination Loan and Grant Purposes

YES! Acquiring, by lease or purchase, eligible equipment as defined in §1703.102;

YES! Acquiring, instructional programming;

YES! Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment, including any related software; developing instructional programming; providing engineering or environmental studies relating to the establishment or expansion of the phase of the project that is being financed with the Combination Loan and Grant (this purpose shall not exceed 10 percent of the total requested financial assistance);

YES! Paying for medical or educational equipment and facilities that are shown to be necessary to implement the project, including vehicles utilizing DLT technology to deliver educational and health care services. The applicant must demonstrate that such items are necessary to meet the purposes of 7 CFR Part 1703 and financial assistance for such equipment and facilities is not available from other sources at a cost that would not adversely affect the economic viability of the project;

YES! Providing links between teachers and students or medical professionals who are located at the same facility, provided that such facility receives or provides distance learning or telemedicine services as part of a distance learning or telemedicine network which meets the purposes of this program;

YES! Providing for site development and alteration of buildings in order to meet the purposes of 7 CFR Part 1703. Financial assistance for this purpose must be necessary and incidental to the total amount of financial assistance requested;

YES! Purchasing land, buildings, or building construction determined by RUS to be necessary and incidental to the project. The applicant must demonstrate that funding from other sources is not available at a cost that does not adversely impact the economic viability of the project as determined by the Administrator. Financial assistance for this purpose must be necessary and incidental to the total amount of financial assistance requested; and

YES! Acquiring telecommunications transmission facilities provided that no telecommunications carrier will install such facilities under the Act or through other financial procedures within a reasonable time period and at a cost to the applicant that does not impact the economic viability of the project, as determined by the Administrator.

Nonapproved Combination Loan and Grant Purposes

Without limitation, funds will **NOT** be provided:

- NO!** To pay salaries, wages, or employee benefits to medical or educational personnel;
- NO!** To pay for the salaries or administrative expenses of the applicant or the project;
- NO!** To purchase equipment that will be owned by the local exchange carrier or another telecommunications service provider ***unless that service provider is the applicant***;
- NO!** To duplicate facilities providing distance learning or telemedicine services in place or to reimburse the applicant or others for costs incurred prior to RUS' receipt of the completed application;
- NO!** For projects located in areas covered by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.);
- NO!** For any purpose that the Administrator has not specifically approved;
- NO!** Except for leases provided for in §1703.131, to pay the cost of recurring or operating expenses for the project; or
- NO!** For any other purposes not specifically contained in §1703.131.

Except as otherwise provided in §1703.131 grant funds shall not be used to finance a project, in part, when success of the project is dependent upon the receipt of additional financial assistance under 7 CFR Part 1703 or is dependent upon the receipt of other funding that is not assured.

EXCEPTION!

Completing the Application

This section addresses all of the information that must be submitted for an application to be complete and considered for financing:

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. <i>A Completed Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424)</i> | G. <i>Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations</i> |
| B. <i>An Executive Summary of the Project</i> | H. <i>Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation</i> |
| C. <i>A Scope of Work</i> | I. <i>Evidence of Authority and Existence</i> |
| D. <i>Financial Information</i> | J. <i>Federal Debt Certification</i> |
| E. <i>A Statement of Experience</i> | K. <i>Supplemental Information</i> |
| F. <i>A Telecommunications System Plan</i> | |

A. *A Completed Standard Form 424, “Application for Federal Assistance”*

Complete this form along with a board of directors resolution authorizing the funding request, Attachment 1.

B. *An Executive Summary of the Project*

The executive summary is one of the most important parts of the application. It gives reviewers their first overall view of the area to be served, what problems the residents face, and how the proposed project will help alleviate those problems, increase the quality of life, and provide enhanced opportunities for rural residents to receive better quality educational and health care opportunities. Give a concise **SUMMARY** of the project. This is your opportunity to briefly discuss the core aspects of the project:

- ◆ *The goals of the project.*
- ◆ *The communities to be served.*
- ◆ *The organizations participating as project partners.*
- ◆ *The technologies to be used.*

The executive summary brings together all of the bits of information which make your application for financing unique. Be clear and provide convincing links between project and benefits. The executive summary must provide a general project overview covering the following nine categories.

Executive Summary

1. A description of why the project is needed.
2. An explanation of how the project will address the needs, why the applicant requires financial assistance, the types of educational or medical services to be offered, and the benefits to the rural residents.
3. A description of the applicant, documenting eligibility.
4. An explanation of the total project cost including a breakdown of the Combination Loan and Grant required and the source of funding, if applicable, for the remainder of the project;
5. A statement that the project is either for a distance learning or telemedicine purpose. If the project provides both distance learning and telemedicine services, the applicant must identify the predominant use of the system.
6. A general overview of the telecommunications system to be developed, including the types of equipment, technologies, and facilities used.
7. A description of the participating hubs and end users sites and the number of rural residents that will be served by the proposed project at each end user site.
8. A certification that the facilities purchased or constructed using financial assistance do not duplicate adequate, established telemedicine services or distance learning services.
9. A listing of the location of each end user site (city, town, village, borough, or rural areas, including state).

Number each paragraph as shown in the example above. Remember, this summary is the first overall picture of your request for assistance and what problems you are attempting to solve.

C. A Scope of Work

The proposed scope of work completes the picture for the application reviewer. It incorporates how the applicant proposes to proceed with the project, if funded. The scope of work must include, at a minimum, the following:

- ◆ The specific activities to be performed under the project.
- ◆ Who will carry out the activities
- ◆ The timeframes for accomplishing the project objectives and activities.
- ◆ A budget for capital expenditures reflecting the line item costs for both the combination loan and grant and any other sources of funds for the project. (See Attachment 3).

**Explain what
you plan to
do!!!**

The Proposed Scope of Work explains what you plan to do. It is your opportunity to make a clear and convincing presentation of the goals of your project.

D. Financial Information

The applicant must provide a summary explaining how the enclosed financial information supports the applicant's need for the financing requested for the project. The applicant must show its financial ability to complete the project; show project feasibility; and provide evidence that it can execute a note for a loan with a maturity period greater than one year. Applicants, including all members of a consortium, must provide an income statement (or revenue and expense report) and balance sheet (reflecting net worth) for the most recent annual reporting period preceding the date of the application. When the applicant is a partnership, company, corporation, or other entity, current balance sheets (reflecting net worth) are needed from each of the entities that has at least a 20 percent interest in the applicant. When the applicant is a consortium, a current balance sheet (reflecting net worth) is needed from each member of the consortium and from each of the entities that has at least a 20 percent interest in such member of the consortium.

- ◆ Applicants must include sufficient pro-forma financial data that adequately reflects the financial capability of project participants and the project as a whole to continue a sustainable project for a minimum of 10 years and repay the loan portion of the Combination Loan and Grant. This documentation should include sources of sufficient income or revenues to pay operating expenses including telecommunications access and toll charges, system maintenance, salaries, training, and any other general operating expenses, provide for replacement of depreciable items, and show repayment of interest and principal for the loan portion of the Combination Loan and Grant.
- ◆ A list of property which will be used as collateral to secure repayment of the loan. The applicant shall purchase and own collateral that secures the loan free from liens or security interests and take all actions necessary to perfect a security interest in the collateral that secures the loan. RUS considers as adequate security for a loan, a guarantee by a RUS telecommunications or electric borrower or by another qualified party. Additional forms of security, including letters of credit, real estate, or any other items will be considered. RUS will determine the adequacy of the security offered.
- ◆ As applicable, a depreciation schedule covering all assets of the project. Those assets for which a Combination Loan and Grant are being requested should be clearly indicated.
- ◆ For each hub and end user site, the applicant must identify and provide reasonable evidence of each source of revenue. If the projection relies on cost sharing arrangements among hub and end user sites, the applicant must provide evidence of agreements made among project participants.
- ◆ For applicants eligible under § 1703.103(a)(3), an explanation of the economic analysis justifying the rate structure to ensure that the benefit, including cost saving, of the financial assistance is passed through to those receiving telemedicine or distance learning services.

E. A Statement of Experience

An applicant must provide a written narrative (not exceeding three single spaced pages) describing its demonstrated capability and experience, if any, in operating an educational or health care endeavor and any project similar to the proposed project. Experience in a similar project is desirable but not required.

F. A Telecommunications System Plan

The Telecommunications System Plan (Plan) is an essential part of the application since it will aid in the scoring of the application in such areas as Cost Effectiveness of the System, and Innovativeness of the Project. The Plan should show that the technology chosen is the most cost effective to provide the needed services and how modern telecommunications technology will be used to meet the unique service requirements of the community. The Plan should explain how telecommunications would be used to enable the proposed project to interconnect with other existing networks at the regional, state, national, or international level. The Plan should discuss any aspects of the project where telecommunications will play an essential part. (See § 1703.134(f) for details.)

G. Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations

The applicant is required to submit evidence that it is in compliance with other Federal statutes and regulations as follows:

- ◆ E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60, Attachment 4;
- ◆ Architectural barriers, Attachment 5;
- ◆ Flood hazard area precautions, Attachment 6;
- ◆ Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, Attachment 7;
- ◆ Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (41 U.S.C. 701), Attachment 8;
- ◆ E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension, Attachment 9;
- ◆ Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352), Attachment 10;
 - If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (See 7 CFR part 3018); and
- ◆ Non Duplication of Services Certificate, Attachment 11.

H. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation

Details of the project’s impact on the environment and historic preservation must be provided. The application must contain a separate section entitled “Environmental Impact of the Project.”

Environmental Information - An “Environmental Questionnaire/Certification,” may be used by applicants to assist in complying with the requirements of this section. Attachment 12.

For a proposed project that only involves internal modifications or equipment additions to buildings or

EXCEPTION!

other structures, the environmental information normally required includes a description of the internal modifications or equipment additions, the size of the site in hectares, and the general nature of the proposed use of the facilities once the project is completed, including any hazardous materials to be used, created or discharged, any substantial amount of air emissions, wastewater discharge, or solid waste that will be generated.

I. Evidence of Authority and Existence

Provide documentation describing your organization and citing its authority to enter into a Grant agreement with RUS, incur debt, and perform the activities proposed under the application.

J. Federal Debt Certification

Complete Attachment 13 certifying that the applicant is not delinquent on any Federal debt and understands actions the Federal Government may take if it fails to make scheduled payments.

K. Supplemental Information

Provide any additional information RUS may consider relevant to the application and necessary to adequately evaluate the application.

Putting It All together

The COMBINATION LOAN AND GRANT application should be assembled and tabbed in the following order: Numbered attachments are provided at the end of this guide for your use. Use only the applicable attachments listed below.

The application for financial assistance should be assembled and tabbed in the following order:

1. An Application for Federal Assistance: Completed Standard Form 424, Attachment 1
2. An Executive Summary
3. Summary Worksheet, Attachment 2
4. Rural Calculation Table, Attachment 2b
5. A Proposed Scope of Work
6. A Sample Budget, Attachment 3
7. Financial Summary and Documentation
8. Funding Commitments from all sources
9. Statement of Experience
10. Telecommunications System Plan
11. Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations
 - (a) E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60, Attachment 4;
 - (b) Architectural barriers, Attachment 5;
 - (c) Flood hazard area precautions, Attachment 6;
 - (d) Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, Attachment 7;
 - (e) Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (41 U.S.C. 701), Attachment 8;
 - (f) E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension; (**See 7 CFR 3017.510**), Attachment 9;
 - (g) Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352), Attachment 10;
 - If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (**See 7 CFR Part 3018**); and
 - (h) Non Duplication of Services Certificate, Attachment 11;
12. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation, Attachment 12
13. Evidence of Authority and Existence
14. Federal Debt Certification, Attachment 13
15. Supplemental Information

<i>Sample certificates and forms are included for your use</i>
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III. Applying for a Loan

The Processing of Loans

Completed applications can be submitted at anytime and will be processed on a first come, first served basis based on availability of funds, the financial feasibility of the project, the services to be provided, the design of the project; costs; location; and other characteristics of the project. RUS will accept applications for a Loan submitted by RUS telecommunications GFRs, by Rural Development State Directors, or by the applicants themselves. All applicants must submit an original and two copies of a completed application. The applicant must also submit a copy of the application to the State government point of contact, if one has been designated for the State, at the same time it submits an application.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible to receive a Loan under the DLT Program, the applicant must be organized in one of the following corporate structures:

- ◆ An incorporated organization, partnership, Indian tribe and tribal organization as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (b) and (c) or other legal entity which operates or will operate a school, college, university, learning center, training facility, or other educational institution, including a regional educational laboratory, library, hospital, medical center, medical clinic or any rural community facility.
- ◆ A consortium, as defined in §1703.102.
- ◆ An incorporated organization, partnership, Indian tribe and tribal organization as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (b) and (c) or other legal entity which is providing or proposes to provide telemedicine service or distance learning service to other legal entities or consortia at rates calculated to ensure that the economic value and other benefits of the distance learning or telemedicine grant or loan is passed through to such other legal entities or consortia.
- ◆ Electric or telecommunications borrowers are eligible as a borrower or as a pass-through lender.
- ◆ Any non-profit or for-profit entity, public or private entity, urban or rural institution, or rural educational broadcaster, which proposes to provide and receive DLT services; or
- ◆ Any entity that contracts with an eligible organization for constructing distance learning or telemedicine facilities for the purposes contained in §1703.141, except for those purposes in §1703.141(h).

At least one of the entities in a partnership or consortium must be eligible individually and the partnership or consortium must provide written evidence of its legal capacity to contract with RUS.

Important Note about Consortia !!
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Rurality Requirement

The proposed project must primarily meet the educational and health care requirements of rural areas. Applicants must meet the minimum eligibility of **20 points** based on its Rurality calculation determining the extent to which the project serves rural areas. A “Rural Calculation Table” is provided for this computation (**See Attachment 2b**).

There is NO Matching Fund Requirement

A Loan may be used by eligible organizations for DLT projects to finance **100%** of the cost of approved purposes.

Approved Combination Loan and Grant Purposes

YES! Acquiring, by lease or purchase, eligible equipment as defined in §1703.102;

YES! Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment, including any related software; developing instructional programming; providing engineering or environmental studies relating to the establishment or expansion of the phase of the project that is being financed with the Loan (this purpose shall not exceed 10 percent of the total requested financial assistance);

YES! Paying for medical or educational equipment and facilities that are shown to be necessary to implement the project, including vehicles utilizing DLT technology to deliver educational and health care services. The applicant must demonstrate that such items are necessary to meet the purposes under 7 CFR Part 1703 and financial assistance for such equipment and facilities is not available from other sources at a cost which would not adversely affect the economic viability of the project;

YES! Providing links between teachers and students or medical professionals who are located at the same facility, provided that such facility receives or provides distance learning or telemedicine services as part of a distance learning or telemedicine network which meets the purposes of this program;

YES! Providing for site development and alteration of buildings in order to meet the purposes of 7 CFR Part 1703. Loans for this purpose must be necessary and incidental to the total amount of financial assistance requested;

YES! Purchasing land, buildings, or building construction determined by RUS to be necessary and incidental to the project. The applicant must demonstrate that funding from other sources is not available at a cost that does not adversely impact the economic viability of the project as determined by the Administrator. Financial assistance for this purpose must be necessary and incidental to the total amount of financial assistance requested;

YES! Acquiring telecommunications transmission facilities provided that no

telecommunications carrier will install such facilities under the Act or through other financial procedures within a reasonable time period and at a cost to the applicant that does not impact the economic viability of the project, as determined by the Administrator;

YES! Any recurring or operating expenses, **except for salaries and administrative expenses**, not included above, **incurred during the first two years of operation after the financial assistance has been approved**. The applicant must show that financing such costs are necessary for the establishment or continued operation of the project and that financing is not available for such costs elsewhere, including from the applicant's financial resources. The Administrator will determine whether such costs will be financed based on information submitted by the applicant. Loans will not be made exclusively to finance such costs, and financing for such costs will not exceed **20 percent of the loan** provided to a project under this section; and

YES! All costs needed to provide distance learning broadcasting to rural areas. Loans may be used to cover the costs of facilities and end-user equipment dedicated to providing educational broadcasting to rural areas for distance learning purposes. If the facilities are not 100 percent dedicated to broadcasting, a portion of the financing may be used to fund such facilities based on a percentage of use factor that approximates the distance learning broadcasting portion of use.

Nonapproved Loan Purposes

Without limitation, funds will **NOT** be provided:

NO!

To pay the costs **incurred after two years from approval** of recurring or operating expenses for the project except for leases : **(See § 1703.141)**;

NO!

To purchase equipment that will be owned by the local exchange carrier or another telecommunications service provider **unless that service provider is the applicant**;

NO

To duplicate facilities providing distance learning or telemedicine services in place or to reimburse the applicant or others for costs incurred prior to RUS' receipt of the completed application;

NO!

For projects located in areas covered by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.); or

NO!

For any purpose that the Administrator has not specifically approved.

Except as otherwise provided in §1703.141, funds shall not be used to finance a project, in part, when success of the project is dependent upon the receipt of additional financial assistance under 7 CFR Part 1703 or is dependent upon the receipt of other funding that is not assured.

EXCEPTION!

Completing the Application

This section addresses all of the information that must be submitted for an application to be complete and considered for financing:

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. <i>A Completed Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424)</i> | G. <i>Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations</i> |
| B. <i>An Executive Summary of the Project</i> | H. <i>Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation</i> |
| C. <i>A Scope of Work</i> | I. <i>Evidence of Authority and Existence</i> |
| D. <i>Financial Information</i> | J. <i>Federal Debt Certification</i> |
| E. <i>A Statement of Experience</i> | K. <i>Supplemental Information</i> |
| F. <i>A Telecommunications System Plan</i> | |

A. *A Completed Standard Form 424, “Application for Federal Assistance”*

Complete this form along with a board of directors resolution authorizing the funding request, Attachment 1.

B. *An Executive Summary of the Project*

The executive summary is one of the most important parts of the application. It gives reviewers their first overall view of the area to be served, what problems the residents face, and how the proposed project will help alleviate those problems, increase the quality of life, and provide enhanced opportunities for rural residents to receive better quality educational and health care opportunities. Give a concise **SUMMARY** of the project. This is your opportunity to briefly discuss the core aspects of the project:

- ◆ *The goals of the project.*
- ◆ *The communities to be served.*
- ◆ *The organizations participating as project partners.*
- ◆ *The technologies to be used.*

The executive summary brings together all of the bits of information which make your application for financing unique. Be clear and provide convincing links between project and benefits. The executive summary must provide a general project overview covering the following nine categories.

Executive Summary

1. A description of why the project is needed.
2. An explanation of how the project will address the needs, why the applicant requires financial assistance, the types of educational or medical services to be offered, and the benefits to the rural residents.
3. A description of the applicant, documenting eligibility.
4. An explanation of the total project cost including a breakdown of the Loan required and the source of funding, if applicable, for the remainder of the project.
5. A statement that the project is either for a distance learning or telemedicine purpose. If the project provides both distance learning and telemedicine services, the applicant must identify the predominant use of the system.
6. A general overview of the telecommunications system to be developed, including the types of equipment, technologies, and facilities used.
7. A description of the participating hubs and end users sites and the number of rural residents that will be served by the proposed project at each end user site.
8. A certification that the facilities purchased or constructed using financial assistance do not duplicate adequate, established telemedicine services or distance learning services.
9. A listing of the location of each end user site (city, town, village, borough, or rural areas, including state).

Number each paragraph as shown in the example above. Remember, this summary is the first overall picture of your request for assistance and what problems you are attempting to solve.

C. A Scope of Work

The proposed scope of work completes the picture for the application reviewer. It incorporates how the applicant proposes to proceed with the project, if funded. The scope of work must include, at a minimum, the following:

- ◆ The specific activities to be performed under the project.
- ◆ Who will carry out the activities
- ◆ The timeframes for accomplishing the project objectives and activities.
- ◆ A budget for capital expenditures reflecting the line item costs for the loan funds and any other sources of funds for the project. (**See Attachment 3.**)

**Explain what
you plan to
do!!!**

The Proposed Scope of Work explains what you plan to do. It is your opportunity to make a clear and convincing presentation of the goals of your project

D. Financial Information

The applicant must provide a summary explaining how the enclosed financial information supports the applicant's need for the financing requested for the project. The applicant must show its financial ability to complete the project; show project feasibility; and provide evidence that it can execute a note for a loan with a maturity period greater than one year. Applicants, including all members of a consortium, must provide an income statement (or revenue and expense report) and balance sheet (reflecting net worth) for the most recent annual reporting period preceding the date of the application. When the applicant is a partnership, company, corporation, or other entity, current balance sheets (reflecting net worth) are needed from each of the entities that has at least a 20 percent interest in the applicant. When the applicant is a consortium, a current balance sheet (reflecting net worth) is needed from each member of the consortium and from each of the entities that has at least a 20 percent interest in such member of the consortium.

- ◆ Applicants must include sufficient pro-forma financial data that adequately reflects the financial capability of project participants and the project as a whole to continue a sustainable project for a minimum of 10 years and repay the Loan. This documentation should include sources of sufficient income or revenues to pay operating expenses including telecommunications access and toll charges, system maintenance, salaries, training, and any other general operating expenses, provide for replacement of depreciable items, and show repayment of interest and principal for the Loan.
- ◆ A list of property which will be used as collateral to secure repayment of the loan. The applicant shall purchase and own collateral that secures the loan free from liens or security interests and take all actions necessary to perfect a security interest in the collateral that secures the loan. RUS considers as adequate security for a loan, a guarantee by a RUS telecommunications or electric borrower or by another qualified party. Additional forms of security, including letters of credit, real estate, or any other items will be considered. RUS will determine the adequacy of the security offered.
- ◆ As applicable, a depreciation schedule covering all assets of the project. Those assets for which a Loan is being requested should be clearly indicated.
- ◆ For each hub and end user site, the applicant must identify and provide reasonable evidence of each source of revenue. If the projection relies on cost sharing arrangements among hub and end user sites, the applicant must provide evidence of agreements made among project participants.
- ◆ For applicants eligible under § 1703.103(a)(3), an explanation of the economic analysis justifying the rate structure to ensure that the benefit, including cost saving, of the financial assistance is passed through to those receiving telemedicine or distance learning services.

E. A Statement of Experience

An applicant must provide a written narrative (not exceeding three single spaced pages) describing its demonstrated capability and experience, if any, in operating an educational or health care endeavor and any project similar to the proposed project. Experience in a similar project is desirable but not required.

F. A Telecommunications System Plan

The Telecommunications System Plan (Plan) is an essential part of the application since it will aid in the scoring of the application in such areas as Cost Effectiveness of the System, and Innovativeness of the Project. The Plan should show that the technology chosen is the most cost effective to provide the needed services and how modern telecommunications technology will be used to meet the unique service requirements of the community. The Plan should explain how telecommunications would be used to enable the proposed project to interconnect with other existing networks at the regional, state, national, or international level. The Plan should discuss any aspects of the project where telecommunications will play an essential part. (See § 1703.134(f) for details.)

G. Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations

The applicant is required to submit evidence that it is in compliance with other Federal statutes and regulations as follows:

- ◆ E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60, Attachment 4;
- ◆ Architectural barriers, Attachment 5;
- ◆ Flood hazard area precautions, Attachment 6;
- ◆ Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, Attachment 7;
- ◆ Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (41 U.S.C. 701), Attachment 8;
- ◆ E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension; (See 7 CFR 3017.510), Attachment 9;
- ◆ Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352), Attachment 10;
 - If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (See 7 CFR Part 3018); and
- ◆ Non Duplication of Services Certificate, Attachment 11.

H. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation

Details of the project’s impact on the environment and historic preservation must be provided. The application must contain a separate section entitled “Environmental Impact of the Project.”

Environmental Information - An “Environmental Questionnaire/Certification,” may be used by applicants to assist in complying with the requirements of this section. Attachment 12.

For a proposed project that only involves internal modifications or equipment additions to buildings or

EXCEPTION!

other structures, the environmental information normally required includes a description of the internal modifications or equipment additions, the size of the site in hectares, and the general nature of the proposed use of the facilities once the project is completed, including any hazardous materials to be used, created or discharged, any substantial amount of air emissions, wastewater discharge, or solid waste that will be generated.

I. Evidence of Authority and Existence

Provide documentation describing your organization and citing its authority to incur debt and perform the activities proposed under the application.

J. Federal Debt Certification

Complete Attachment 13 certifying that the applicant is not delinquent on any federal debt and understands actions the Federal Government may take if it fails to make scheduled payments.

K. Supplemental Information

Provide any additional information RUS may consider relevant to the application and necessary to adequately evaluate the application.

Putting It All Together

The LOAN application should be assembled and tabbed in the following order: Numbered attachments are provided at the end of this guide for your use. Use only the applicable attachments listed below.

The application for financial assistance should be assembled and tabbed in the following order:

1. An Application for Federal Assistance: Completed Standard Form 424, Attachment 1
2. An Executive Summary
3. Summary Worksheet, Attachment 2
4. Rural Calculation Table, Attachment 2b
5. A Proposed Scope of Work
6. Financial Summary and Documentation
7. A Sample Budget, Attachment 3
8. Funding Commitments from all sources
9. Statement of Experience
10. Telecommunications System Plan
11. Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations
 - (a) E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60, Attachment 4;
 - (b) Architectural barriers, Attachment 5;
 - (c) Flood hazard area precautions, Attachment 6;
 - (d) Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, Attachment 7;
 - (e) Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (41 U.S.C. 701), Attachment 8;
 - (f) E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension; (**See 7 CFR 3017.510**), Attachment 9;
 - (g) Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352), Attachment 10;
 - If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (**See 7 CFR Part 3018**); and
 - (h) Non Duplication of Services Certificate, Attachment 11.
12. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation, Attachment 12
13. Evidence of Authority and Existence
14. Federal Debt Certification, Attachment 13
15. Supplemental Information

<i>Sample certificates and forms are included for your use</i>
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Distance Learning and Telemedicine Application Guide, FY 1999

OMB Approval No. 0348-0043

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE		2. DATE SUBMITTED	Application Identifier
1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: <i>Preapplication</i> <i>Application</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction		3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE	State Application Identifier
		4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY	Federal Identifier
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION			
Legal Name:		Organizational Unit	
Address (give city, county, state, and zip code)		Name and telephone number of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application (give area code) Technical: Budgetary: Contractual:	
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: (enter appropriate letter in box) 	
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION: <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision If Revision, enter appropriate letter(s) in boxes(es) A. Increase Award B. Decrease Award C. Increase Duration D. Decrease Duration Other (specify): _____		A. State H. Independent School Dist. B. County I. State Controlled Institution of Higher Learning C. Municipal J. Private University D. Township K. Indian Tribe E. Interstate L. Individual F. Intermunicipal M. Profit Organization G. Special District N. Other (Specify): _____	
		9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY:	
10. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>		11. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT:	
TITLE:			
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (cities, counties, states, etc.)			
13. PROPOSED PROJECT:		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS OF:	
Start Date	Ending Date	a. Applicant b. Project	
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING:		16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? a. YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE _____ b. NO. <input type="checkbox"/> PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372 <input type="checkbox"/> OR PROGRAM HAS NOT BEEN SELECTED BY STATE FOR REVIEW	
a. Federal	\$		
b. Applicant	\$		
c. State	\$		
d. Local	\$		
e. Other	\$		
f. Program Income	\$	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If "Yes," attach an explanation. <input type="checkbox"/> No	
g. TOTAL	\$		
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED			
a. Typed Name of Authorized Representative		b. Title	c. Telephone number
d. Signature of Authorized Representative		e. Date Signed	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SF 424

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 45 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget. Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0043), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

This is a standard form used by applicants as a required facesheet for preapplications and applications submitted for Federal assistance. It will be used by Federal agencies to obtain applicant certification that States which have established a review and comment procedure in response to Executive Order 12372 and have selected the program to be included in their process, have been given an opportunity to review the applicant's submission.

Item: Entry

1. Self-explanatory.
2. Date application submitted to Federal agency (or State, if applicable) & applicant's control number (if applicable).
3. State use only (if applicable).
4. If this application is to continue or revise an existing award, enter present Federal identifier number. If for a new project, leave blank.
5. Legal name of applicant, name of primary organizational unit which will undertake the assistance activity, complete address of the applicant, and name and telephone number of the person to contact on matters related to this application.
6. Enter Employer Identification Number (EIN) as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service.
7. Enter the appropriate letter in the space provided.
8. Check appropriate box and enter appropriate letter(s) in the space(s) provided:
 - "New" means a new assistance award.
 - "Continuation" means an extension for an additional funding/budget period for a project with a projected completion date.
 - "Revision" means any change in the Federal Government's financial obligation or contingent liability from an existing obligation.
9. Name of Federal agency from which assistance is being requested with this application.
10. Use the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number and title of the program under which assistance is required.
11. Enter a brief descriptive title of the project. If more than one program is involved, you should append an explanation on a separate sheet. If appropriate (e.g., construction or real property projects), attach a map showing project location. For preapplications, use a separate sheet to provide a summary description of this project.
12. List only the largest political entities affected (e.g., State, counties, cities.)
13. Self-explanatory.
14. List the applicant's Congressional District and any District(s) affected by the program or project.
15. Amount requested or to be contributed during the first funding/budget period by each contributor. Value of in-kind contributions should be included on appropriate lines as applicable. If the action will result in a dollar change to an existing award, include *only* the amount of the change. For decreases, enclose the amounts in parentheses. If both basic and supplemental amounts are included, show breakdown on an attached sheet. For multiple program funding, use totals and show breakdown using same categories as item 15.
16. Applicants should contact the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Federal Executive Order 12372 to determine whether the application is subject to the State intergovernmental review process.
17. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit allowances, loans and taxes.
18. To be signed by the authorized representative of the applicant. A copy of the governing body's authorization for you to sign this application as official representative must be on file in the applicant's office. (Certain Federal agencies may require that this authorization be submitted as part of the application.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

Summary Worksheet

Please print or type.

Legal Name: _____

Organization Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number _____

Address: _____

Grant Requested _____

Loan Requested _____

Matching Funds _____

Other Supplemental Funding _____

Total Project Cost _____

This application predominately serves ☐ Educational ☐ Medical purposes.
*(If the project provides both distance learning and telemedicine services, the
applicant must identify the predominant use of the system.)*

In the absence of the telecommunications systems proposed in this application, what types of internet access are available at each site?

<i>Type Of Connection</i>		<i>Maximum information rate (bits/second)</i>
<i>Type Of Connection</i>	<i>Toll Local</i>	
Dial-up modem	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
Cable modem		
DSL		
TSPS		
Other		

Characteristics of the system proposed in this application:

	<i>Type of Connection</i>					<i>Information Rate (bits/second)</i>
	twisted pair	co-ax cable	fiber optics	wireless ¹	other ¹	
Between Project Sites	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Connections To The World	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

1. If wireless or other, describe the type of technology e.g. unlicensed spread spectrum, terrestrial 6 GHz point-to-point microwave, etc.

Objective Scoring Worksheet

RURALITY:	<p>A “Rural Calculation Table” was provided as Attachment 2b in the Application Guide. Attach that document and enter the total number of points according to the worksheet.</p>	<p>___ pts (up to 45 pts.)</p>
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM (NSLP):	<p>A “NSLP Calculation Table” was provided as Attachment 2c in the Application Guide. Attach that document and enter the total number of points according to the worksheet.</p> <p><i>Sum of the eligible NSLP percentages</i> _____ (1) <i>Total number of end-user sites</i> _____ (2) <i>Average NSLP for the Project:</i> _____ <i>Divide (1) by (2)</i> _____ %</p> <p><i>Award the appropriate number of points based on the Average NSLP for the Project.</i></p> <p>0 pts. if < 25% 15 pts. if ‡ 25% but < 50%; 25 pts. if ‡ 50% but < 75%; 35 pts. if ‡ 75%.</p>	<p>_____ pts (up to 35 pts.)</p>
LEVERAGING:	<p>Attach all documentation to this form from authorized representatives indicating that the matching funds are available and will be used for the proposed project.</p> <p><i>Total eligible matching funds:</i> _____ (1) <i>Total RUS financial assistance:</i> _____ (2)</p> <p><i>Divide (1) by (2) and multiply by 100 (percent match):</i> _____</p> <p><i>Award the appropriate number of points based on the matching percentage:</i></p> <p>0 pts. if ‡ 42.85% and £ 70%; 15 pts. if > 70% and £ 100%; 25 pts. if >100% and £ 150%; 30 pts. if >150% and £ 200%; 35 pts. if >200%.</p>	<p>_____ pts (up to 35 pts.)</p>
EZ/EC AND CHAMPION COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:	<p>Award ten points if at least one end user site is located in an EZ/EC (www.ezec.gov). Award five points if at least one end user site is located in a Champion Community. List locations and provide supporting details in an attachment to your application..</p>	<p>_____ pts (up to 15 pts.)</p>

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

RURAL CALCULATION TABLE

Use the following guidelines to determine the rurality of each end user site.

Rurality Description	Points Awarded
Exceptionally Rural Area - Any area of the United States not included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants.	45
Rural Area - Any area of the United States included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 inhabitants.	30
Mid-Rural Area - Any area of the United States included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.	15
Urban Area - Any area of the United States included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.	0

Each end user site will receive points based on its location in accordance with the above guidelines. If a hub is utilized as an end user site, the hub will be considered as an end user site.

<u>End User Site Location</u>	<u>Rurality</u> <u>(Exceptionally Rural, Rural,</u> <u>Mid-Rural, or Urban)</u>	<u>Points</u>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
Average score of all end user sites (Total Points / # of end user sites)		

Note: This table is representative of the information required and does not restrict the applicant to only 5 sites. For more than 5 sites, make a similar table that will contain all proposed sites.
(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

National School Lunch Program Calculation Table

Use the following guidelines to determine the applicable average National School Lunch Program (NSLP) eligibility percent for the proposed project.

1. Public school or non-profit private schools of high school grade or under should use the actual eligibility percentage for that particular school.
2. Schools and institutions of higher learning ineligible to participate in the NSLP and non-school end user sites (medical facilities, libraries, etc.) should use the eligibility percentage of all students in the school district where the end user will be located.

Based on the above guidelines, provide the applicable percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the NSLP in the areas where the end user sites comprising the project are located.

End User Site #	Specific Location (city, village, town, etc.)	County & State	Total Number of Students, Percent of those Students Eligible to Participate in NSLP, and Source of Information*		
			#	%	Source
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
Average NSLP (Sum of the eligible NSLP for each end user site / # of end user sites) = _____%					

**Include the name of state or local organization administering the program as well as the name, title, and phone number of person providing the information.*

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

Sample Budget

Hub/End-User Site	Quantity	Description	Cost per Unit	Total	RUS Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Other
Hub Site							
Lease or Purchase of Eligible Equipment							
1	Video Webcasting/streaming software	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000		\$ 14,000	¹	
1	ITV Network Transmission Equipment	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000		\$ 15,000	¹	
1	Video Camera Package	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000	¹	
1	Computer Projection Panel	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500		\$ 3,500	³	
Instructional Programming							
1	Initial installation and training	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000			
TOTAL SITE COST			\$ 87,500	\$ 87,500	\$ 30,000	\$ 57,500	\$ -
End User Site #1							
Lease or Purchase of Eligible Equipment							
5	ITV Video/Audio Classroom Equipment	\$ 16,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000			
2	Webcast stations @ end-users site	\$ 12,000	\$ 24,000		\$ 24,000	²	
2	VCR's for Classroom	\$ 250	\$ 500		\$ 500	²	
2	32" Monitors with Connector boxes	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000	²	
TOTAL SITE COST			\$ 29,250	\$ 106,500	\$ 80,000	\$ 26,500	\$ -
End User Site #2							
Lease or Purchase of Eligible Equipment							
6	ITV Video/Audio Classroom Equipment	\$ 16,000	\$ 96,000	\$ 96,000			
2	Webcast stations @ end-users site	\$ 12,000	\$ 24,000		\$ 24,000	²	
2	VCR's for Classroom	\$ 250	\$ 500		\$ 500	²	
2	32" Monitors with Connector boxes	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000	²	
TOTAL SITE COST			\$ 29,250	\$ 122,500	\$ 96,000	\$ 26,500	\$ -
End User Site #3							
Lease or Purchase of Eligible Equipment							
6	ITV Video/Audio Classroom Equipment	\$ 16,000	\$ 96,000	\$ 96,000			
2	Webcast stations @ end-users site	\$ 12,000	\$ 24,000		\$ 24,000	²	
1	VCR's for Classroom	\$ 250	\$ 250		\$ 250	²	
1	32" Monitors with Connector boxes	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000	²	
TOTAL SITE COST			\$ 29,250	\$ 121,250	\$ 96,000	\$ 25,250	\$ -
Total RUS Eligible Purpose				\$ 437,750	\$ 302,000	\$ 135,750	\$ -
Other Ineligible Purposes							
2	Salaries	\$ 40,000	\$ 80,000				\$ 80,000
3	Travel	\$ 2,000	\$ 6,000				\$ 6,000
4	Recurring Line Costs/year	\$ 12,000	\$ 48,000				\$ 48,000
GRAND TOTALS				\$ 571,750	\$ 302,000	\$ 135,750	\$ 134,000
Regulatory Specifications and Matching Funds Allocation							
Up to 70 percent of the cost of allowable purposes can be financed by RUS Grant requests:							
RUS Grant Request		\$ 302,000	68.99%				
Matching (Cash and In-Kind)		\$ 135,750	31.01%				
Total		\$ 437,750	100.00%				
Up to 10 percent of the costs associated with the initial capital assets associated with the technical assistance and instructional programming (7 CFR 1703.121) can be financed by RUS Grant requests:							
Initial installation and training		\$ 30,000	9.93%				
Total Allowable RUS Purposes		\$ 302,000					
Matching Fund Allocation							
¹ Cash from the applicant							
² In-Kind Match from Company X - see commitment letter pg.							
³ In-Kind Match from Company Z - see commitment letter pg.							

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION CERTIFICATION

All grants and loans made under 7 CFR Part 1703 are subject to the nondiscrimination provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, (7 CFR Part 15); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*; 7 CFR Part 15b); and Age Discrimination of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101 *et seq.*; 45 CFR Part 90); and as amended by Executive Order 11375 Amending Executive Order 11246, Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity (3 CFR, 1966, 1970 Comp., p. 684).

All recipients of financial assistance from RUS, the prospective primary participant commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements of the above laws and executive orders to the effect that no person in the United States shall, "on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under the RUS Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Programs."

The _____ (Grantee/Borrower)
hereby certifies that, as a prospective recipient under the said Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, it will comply with the above reference laws and executive orders.

(Date)

(Signature)

(Type or Print Name)

(Title)

(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

CERTIFICATE REGARDING ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

All facilities financed with RUS grants and/or loans funds that are open to the public, or in which physically handicapped persons may be employed or reside, must be designed, constructed, and/or altered to be readily accessible to, and usable by handicapped persons. Standards for these facilities must comply with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4151 *et seq.*) and with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), (Appendix A to 41 CFR subpart 101-19.6).

As a prospective primary participant recipient of financial assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements of the above referenced law to the effect that all facilities must be readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.

The _____ (Grantee/Borrower) hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant and Loan Program, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

(Date)

(Signature)

(Name Typed or Printed)

(Title)

(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service

CERTIFICATE REGARDING FLOOD HAZARD AREA PRECAUTIONS

In accordance with 7 CFR Part 1788, if the project is in an area subject to flooding, flood insurance must be provided to the extent available and required under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended by the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4001 through 4128). If applicable, the insurance must cover, in addition to the buildings, any machinery, equipment, fixtures, and furnishings contained in the buildings. RUS will comply with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management (3 CFR, 1977 Comp., p. 117), and 7 CFR 1794.41, of this chapter in considering the application for the project.

Please check the appropriate line below:

- ___ a) The project is not located in a 100 year flood plain; therefore, no Flood Insurance is required.
- ___ b) The project is located in a 100 year flood plain and the required insurance is or will be provided by:

The _____ (Grantee/Borrower) hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance during construction and/or installation of equipment and upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

(Date)

(Signature)

(Name Typed or Printed)

(Title)

(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service

**UNIFORM RELOCATION ASSISTANCE AND REAL PROPERTY
ACQUISITION POLICIES ACT OF 1970 CERTIFICATION**

The _____ (Grantee/Borrower)
assures that it will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property
Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Uniform Act), 42 U.S.C. 4601-4655, and with
implementing Federal regulations in 49 CFR Part 24 and 7 CFR Part 21.

Specifically, the _____ (Grantee/Borrower)
assures that:

Whenever Federal financial assistance is used to pay for any part of the cost of a program or
project which will result in the displacement of any person;

- (a) Fair and reasonable relocation payments and assistance shall be provided to or for
displaced persons in accordance with sections 202, 203, and 204 of the Uniform
Act,
- (b) Relocation assistance programs offering the services described in section 205 of the
Uniform Act shall be provided to displaced persons, and
- (c) Within a reasonable period of time prior to displacement, comparable replacement
dwellings will be available to displaced persons in accordance with section 205(c)
(3) of the Uniform Act.

Date

Signature of President or Authorized Official of Ultimate Recipient

*(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the
application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine
Loan and Grant Program.)*

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Rural Utilities Service

**CERTIFICATION REGARDING
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS (GRANTS/LOANS)
ALTERNATIVE I - FOR GRANTEE/BORROWERS OTHER THAN INDIVIDUALS**

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Sections 5151-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D; 41 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*), 7 CFR Part 3017, Subpart F, Section 3017.600, Purpose. The January 31, 1989, regulations were amended and published as Part II of the May 25, 1990, Federal Register (pages 21681-21691). Copies of the regulations may be obtained by contacting the Department of Agriculture agency offering the grant/loan.

ALTERNATIVE I

A. The grantee/borrower certifies that it will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:

- (a) Publishing a statement notifying employees that unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee/borrower's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;
- (b) Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
 - (1) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
 - (2) The grantee/borrower's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
 - (3) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
 - (4) The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
- (c) Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant/loan be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph (a);
- (d) Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph (a) that, as a condition of employment under the grant/loan, the employee will:
 - (1) Abide by the terms of the statement; and
 - (2) Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than 5 calendar days after such conviction;
- (e) Notifying the Agency in writing, within 10 calendar days after receiving notice under subparagraph (d) (2) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to every grant/loan officer on whose grant/loan activity the convicted employee was working, unless the Federal agency has designated a central point for the receipt of such notices. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant/loan;

- (f) Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under subparagraph (d)(2), with respect to any employee who is so convicted:
- (1) Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or
 - (2) Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;
- (g) Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f).

B. The grantee/borrower may insert in the space provided below the site(s) for the performance of work done in connection with the specific grant/loan:

Place of Performance:

Street Address

City

County

State

Zip Code

_____ **Check if there are workplaces on file that are not identified here.**

Organization Name

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Rural Utilities Service**

**CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, AND OTHER
RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS - PRIMARY COVERED TRANSACTIONS**

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 7 CFR Part 3017, Section 3017.510, Participants' Responsibilities. The regulations were published as Part IV of the January 30, 1989, Federal Register (pages 4722-4733). Copies of the regulations may be obtained by contacting the Department of Agriculture agency offering the proposed transaction.

- (1) The prospective primary participant certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:
 - (a) are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for Debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
 - (b) have not within a 3-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
 - (c) are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1)(b) of this certification; and
 - (d) have not within a 3-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.
- (2) Where the prospective primary participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Organization Name

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

**CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING FOR CONTRACTS,
GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant or loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. (Copies of this form may be obtained from RUS.)
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Organization Name

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

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**U.S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

NON DUPLICATION OF SERVICES CERTIFICATE

As a prospective primary participant recipient of assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements that no facilities using financial assistance will duplicate adequate established telemedicine services and/or distance learning services.

The _____ (Grantee/Borrower) hereby certifies that as a prospective recipient under the said Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, that it will not use RUS grant and/or loan funds to duplicate any adequate established services as referenced above.

(Date)

(Signature)

(Name Typed or Printed)

(Title)

(This is not an official Government form. It has been prepared to assist and expedite the application process and is only intended for use in the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program.)

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

**Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program
Environmental Questionnaire/Certification**

Environmental Project Summary (Refer to 7 CFR 1703.109(i)(1)):

(This description should encompass all construction in the project, no matter the source of funding. It should provide details of how the project will impact the environment (wetlands, farmlands, floodplain, cultural environment, endangered species, environmental quality, and historic preservation). If additional space is needed, continue on white bond paper and insert between the first and second pages.)

If the construction proposed in this application will not impact the environment or historic preservation, you may sign the certification indicating that no adverse impact and skip filling out the questionnaire.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the construction proposed in this application will not adversely impact the environment or historic preservation.

(Signature and Date)

(Print or Type Title)

QUESTIONNAIRE

Note: It is extremely important to respond to all questions completely to ensure expeditious processing of the Distance Learning and Telemedicine application. The information herein is required by Federal law.

Important: Any activity related to the project that may adversely affect the environment or limit the choice of reasonable development alternatives shall not be undertaken prior to the completion of Rural Utilities Service's environmental review process.

Legal Name of Applicant _____

Signature (Type, sign, & date) _____

The applicant's representative certifies to the best of his/her knowledge and belief that the information contained herein is accurate. Any false information may result in disqualification for consideration of financial assistance or the rescission of financial assistance.

I. Project Description - Detailing construction, including, but not limited to internal modifications of existing structures, and/or installation of telecommunications transmission facilities (defined in 7 CFR 1703.102), including satellite uplinks or downlinks, microwave transmission towers, and cabling.

1. Describe the portion of the project, and site locations (including legal ownership of real property), involving internal modifications, or equipment additions to buildings or other structures (e.g., relocating interior walls or adding computer facilities) for each site.

2. Describe the portion of the project, and site locations (including legal ownership or real property), involving construction of transmission facilities, including cabling, microwave towers, satellite dishes, or disturbance of property of .99 acres or greater for each project site.

3. Describe the nature of the proposed use of the facilities and whether any hazardous materials, air emissions, wastewater discharge, or solid waste will result.

4. State whether or not any project site(s) contain or are near properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and identify any historic properties. (The applicant must supply evidence that the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has cleared development regarding any historical properties).

5. Provide information whether or not any facility(ies) or site(s) are located in a 100-year floodplain. A National Flood Insurance Map should be included reflecting the location of the project site(s).

II. For projects that involve construction of transmission facilities, including cabling, microwave towers, satellite dishes, or physical disturbance of real property of .99 acres or greater, the following information must be submitted (7 CFR 1703.109(i)(3)).

1. A map (*preferably a U.S. Geological Survey map*) of the area for each site affected by construction (include as an attachment).
2. A description of the amount of property to be cleared, excavated, fenced, or otherwise disturbed by the project and a description of the current land use and zoning and any vegetation for each project site affected by construction.
3. A description of buildings or other structures (i.e., transmission facilities), including dimensions, to be constructed or modified.
4. A description of the presence of wetlands or existing agricultural operations and/or threatened or endangered species or critical habitats on or near the project site(s) affected by construction.
5. Describe any actions taken to mitigate any environmental impacts resulting from the proposed project (use attachment if necessary).

Note: The applicant may submit a copy of any environmental review, study assessment, report or other document that has been prepared in connection with obtaining permits, approvals, or other financing for the proposed project from State, local or other Federal bodies. Such material, to the extent relevant, may be used to meet the requirements herein.

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Utilities Service**

FEDERAL OBLIGATIONS CERTIFICATION ON DELINQUENT DEBT

The following statement and certification will become a part of your application currently on file for a loan from the Rural Utilities Service and/or the Rural Telephone Bank.

IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? _____ YES _____ NO

Note: Example of debts include, but are not limited to, delinquent taxes, guaranteed or direct government loans (more than 31 days past due) and other administrative debts.

If Yes, provide explanatory information.

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION
FEDERAL COLLECTION POLICIES FOR COMMERCIAL DEBT

The Federal Government is authorized by law to take any or all of the following actions in the event that a borrower's loan payments become delinquent or the borrower defaults on its loan: (1) Report the borrower's delinquent account to a credit bureau; (2) Assess additional interest and penalty charges for the period of time that payment is not made; (3) Assess charges to cover additional administrative costs incurred by the Government to service the borrower's account; (4) Offset amounts owed to the borrower under other Federal programs; (5) Refer the borrower's debt to the Internal Revenue Service for offset against any amount owed to the borrower as an income tax refund; (6) Refer the borrower's account to a private collection agency to collect the amount due; and (7) Refer the borrower's account to the Department of Justice for litigation in the courts.

All of these actions can and will be used to recover any debts owed when it is determined to be in the interest of the Government to do so.

Certification

I have read and understand the actions the Federal Government can take in the event that I fail to meet my scheduled payments in accordance with the terms and conditions of my agreements.

Signed: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Date: _____

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